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VERBESINA TAMAULIPANA (ASTERACEAE), A NEW SPECIES FROM MEXICO, BELONGING TO SECTION *OCRACTINIA*

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ABSTRACT

A new species of *Verbesina*, **V. tamaulipana** B.L. Turner, is described from the Sierra Tamaulipas of northeastern México. It belongs to the section *Ochractinia* where it relates to *V. microptera* and *V. virginica*, differing from both of these in having mostly basal leaves and larger ray florets.

KEY WORDS: Asteraceae, *Verbesina*, *Ochractinia*, México

Olsen (1985) provided a synopsis of sect. *Ochractinia* of *Verbesina* in which he recognized 40 species, most of these restricted to North America and recognized by their white ray and disk florets. The present novelty adds an additional species.

Verbesina tamaulipana B.L. Turner, *sp. nov.* TYPE: MEXICO. Tamaulipas: Sierra Tamaulipas, Tres Piedras Canyon, pine-oak ridge in igneous rocky soils, along trail to Los Cerritos (ca. 23° 12′ 10″ × 98° 14′ 30″), 720-740 m, 7-8 Oct 1993, *T.F. Patterson 7306*, with Mark Mayfield (HOLOTYPE: TEX!; Isotypes: ENCB!,MEXU!,WIS!).

Verbesinae micropterae DC. similis sed foliis plerumque basalibus (vs. secus caules aequaliter dispositis), capitulis paucioribus in capitulescentia laxiore, et flosculis radii ligulis longioribus (6-8 mm longis vs. 3-4 mm) differt.

Perennial herbs 25-55 cm high. Stems stiffly erect, winged throughout, the wings sparsely pilose, 0.5-2.0 mm wide. Leaves mostly clustered near the base of the stem forming a pseudo rosette, abruptly much reduced above

the cluster; larger (basal) leaves mostly 10-20 cm long, 4-7 cm wide; petioles broadly winged, 3-5 cm long; blades broadly ovate to elliptic, irregularly dentate, pilose beneath, especially along the veins. Capitulescence broad and open, 3-12 headed, the ultimate peduncles mostly 2-5 cm long, densely long-pilose. Involucres campanulate, 4-5 mm high, the bracts 2-3 seriate, lanceolate, appressed-pilose, subequal. Receptacular bracts with white scarious acute apices. Ray florets ca. 11, pistillate, fertile, the ligules white, mostly 6-8 mm long, 2-3 mm wide. Disk florets 50-60 (estimated); corollas white, 3-4 mm long, the tube ca. 1 mm long. Anthers purple-black, the appendages white or purple. Achenes ca. 3.5 mm long, the wings ca. 0.8 mm wide (rarely wingless); pappus of 2 awns 1.0-1.5 mm long.

ADDITIONAL SPECIMEN EXAMINED: MEXICO. Tamaulipas: Sierra Tamaulipas, Ejido El Cabrito, 27 Sep 1984, *Rodriguez et al. 113* (TEX).

This taxon is clearly closely related to the widespread *Verbesina microptera* DC. but is readily distinguished from that species by having mostly basal leaves (vs. evenly distributed along the stems), a more open, fewer-headed, capitulescence with larger heads and much longer ligules (6-8 mm long vs. 2-4 mm long). When first examined, I took the plants concerned to be abnormal or atypical forms of *V. microptera*, but one of the collectors, Mr. Mark Mayfield, assured me that the peculiar, mostly basal-leafed habit and larger heads occurred throughout the area. Several populations were observed over a large area and the plants concerned were consistent between and within populations.

Verbesina tamaulipana and *V. microptera* belong to the sect. *Ochractinia* of *Verbesina*. In the U.S.A., *Ochractinia* is represented by only two herbaceous species, *V. virginica* L. and *V. microptera* (Olsen 1979). Subsequently, Olsen (1985) provided a synoptic study of the North American *Ochractinia*, most of the species being white-flowered tropical or subtropical shrubs or trees. He recognized two closely related herbaceous species in northeastern México, *V. microptera* and *V. rumicifolia* B.L. Robs. & Greenm. With my description of *V. tamaulipana*, there are now three closely related herbaceous species of sect. *Ochractinia* in northeastern México, as follows:

1. Leaves mostly clustered near the base of stems; ray florets with ligules 6-8 mm long; Sierra Tamaulipas, Tamaulipas. ..... *V. tamaulipana*

1. Leaves evenly distributed along the stems; ray florets with ligules 2-4 mm long. .....(2)

   2. Midstem leaves 15-25 cm long, the blades widest at or near the middle, sparsely pubescent beneath, mainly along the veins, otherwise glabrous; central Coahuila. ..... *V. rumicifolia*

   2. Midstem leaves 8-20 cm long, the blades widest well below the middle, evenly pubescent throughout; widespread. ..... *V. microptera*

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LITERATURE CITED

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